



# DERBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**Dr. Matthew Conway, Jr.**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

Co-Chair Senator McCrory  
Co-Chair Representative Currey  
Ranking Member Senator Berthel  
Ranking Member Representative McCarty

Dear Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty and Honorable Members of the Education Committee:

My name is Matt Coway and I write to you today as Superintendent of Derby Public Schools as well as President of CAPSS and would like to share comments about HB 6880 AN ACT CONCERNING ASSORTED REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES, HB 6881 AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES RELATED TO EDUCATOR COMPENSATION AND PARAEDUCATORS, SB 1198 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCHOOL INDOOR AIR QUALITY WORKING GROUP and SB 1200 AN ACT CONCERNING SPECIAL EDUCATION

While we agree with parts of HB 6880 AN ACT CONCERNING ASSORTED REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES, mandating a 30 minute lunch for all students may be problematic and reduce instructional time for students depending on a school's current class schedule. Local and Regional Boards of education are best suited to determine the length of a lunch period and should be provided the flexibility to implement a schedule that best meets the needs of all students. Aan example, keeping lunch at 20 minutes and extending

While we support part of HB 6881 AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES RELATED TO EDUCATOR COMPENSATION AND PARAEDUCATORS, and while we currently offer over 30 hours of annual training to our paraeducators, mandating districts offer this training up and above all mandatory training places another unfunded mandate on districts. In addition, while we offer multiple health insurance plans to our paraeducators, paying the employee contribution becomes an unfunded mandate on the municipality and sets a precedent to pay it for all employees.

While we support increasing the amount of funding under heating, ventilation and air conditioning system grant program, in SB 1198 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCHOOL INDOOR AIR QUALITY WORKING GROUP, until every school is properly equipped with updated equipment, meeting the requirements of an optimal thermal range could result in many school closures on certain days at the beginning and end of schools years, extending the school year beyond the statutory June 30th date.

While we support parts of SB 1200 AN ACT CONCERNING SPECIAL EDUCATION. If we prohibit the use of seclusion in schools, other revisions to the laws governing physical restraint would need to be considered to include how seclusion is currently reported. Seclusion does not just apply to use of a formally identified “seclusion room”. Seclusion is defined as the confinement of a person in *any room* [emphasis added], from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Following each instance of seclusion, documentation is submitted to both the parent/guardian and the CSDE. Further, it is important to note that staff must utilize the closest reasonable space when the use of seclusion has been deemed necessary to prevent imminent risk of injury to the student or others. As it relates to seclusion, the emergency use of restraint during the transport of a child in crisis would also need to be addressed, as best practice indicates the need for frequent pauses (approximately after each 50 ft transport) to monitor and assess the child’s overall wellbeing.